also see #138 for solo interview — 7 respondent — Group interview

Project I.D. No. 45

NAME: Sakaguchi, Maju DATE OF BIRTH: 1895 PLACE OF BIRTH: Kumamoto
Age: 78 Sex: F Marital Status: ____ Education: ____

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 1915 Age: 20 M.S. ____ Port of entry: ____
Occupation/s: 1. Husband - Farmer 2. ____ 3. ____
Place of residence: 1. San Jose, Ca. (6 yrs) 2. Cortez, Ca. 3. ____
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Community organizations/activities: ____

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center: Merced Assembly Center
Name of relocation center: Amache, Colorado
Dispensation of property: ____ Names of bank/s: ____
Jobs held in camp: 1. ____ 2. ____
Jobs held outside of camp: ____
Left camp to go to: Cortez, California

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: 1945
Address/es: 1. Cortez, California 2. ____
3. ____
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Activities: 1. ____ 2. ____ 3. ____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: ____

Name of interviewer: Heihachiro Takarabe Date: 11/7/73 Place: Cortez, Ca.
Translation: H. Takarabe

See Japet 138 ID — discrepancy of use name & age

NAME: Mrs. Maju Sakaguchi

AGE: 78 years old

BIRTHDATE: 1895

BIRTHPLACE: Kumamoto Ken

WHAT YEAR AND AGE DID YOU COME TO THE U.S.? 1915

MAJOR OCCUPATION: Husband was a farmer

RELOCATION CAMP: Amache, Colorado

NAMES: 1) Shigeru Mayeda

2) Kajioka

3) Mrs. Mai Yoshioka

X 4) Mrs. Maju Sakaguchi

5) Mrs. Aiko Yamamoto

6) Saburo Narita

7) Mrs. Haruko Narita

Interviewed Date: November 7, 1973

Interviewer: Hei Takarabe

Translated date:

Translator: Hei Takarabe

also see group interview #45

Solo interview
Project I.D. No138

NAME: Sakaguchi 坂口 Mazu DATE OF BIRTH: 1895 PLACE OF BIRTH: Kumamoto
Age: 80 Sex: F Marital Status: W Education: Grammar school

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 1916 Age: 21 M.S.P.B. Port of entry: San Fran.
Occupation/s: 1. Farmer's wife 2. 3.
Place of residence: 1. San Jose 2. Cortez 3.
Religious affiliation:
Community organizations/activities:

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center: Merced
Name of relocation center: Amache
Dispensation of property: Left them in Cortez Names of bank/s:
Jobs held in camp: 1. Kitchen helper 2. Policeman (husband)
Jobs held outside of camp:
Left camp to go to: Cortez

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: Aug. 1945
Address/es: 1. Cortez 2.
3.
Religious affiliation: Christian church
Activities: 1. 2. 3.
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: Husband died in 1968.

Name of interviewer: Takarabe Date: 7/10/75 Place: Cortez
Translator: Mabel Hall

Sei Sano #45 ? -
discrepancy ? 1st name + age

Q: At first, please tell me your name?

A: My name is Maju Sakaguchi.

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Kumamoto Prefecture.

Q: When were you born?

A: I was born in 1895.

Q: How old are you now?

A: I am 80 years old.

Q: Did you go to school when you were little?

A: Yes, I did but as we were a farming family in the country I did not go to school much. In those days my mother told me that a girl does not have to get much education but had better learn sewing and weaving. Now a days schooling is important, but in those days I did not get much education.

Q: What kind of a man was your father?

A: He was a very gentle and quiet person, and was loved by everyone.

Q: Was he a farmer?

A: Yes, he was. As he had a big farm I helped out in the field once in a while instead of going to school.

Q: What kind of a person was your mother?

A: She was a very cheerful person. She came from a place named Matsuo. She did not have much education, either, so she worked in the field. She was a high-spirited mother and was loved by everyone. She died of cancer of the stomach when she was about 62 years old.

Q: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

A: There were 5 of us.

Q: Were you the oldest?

A: I was the third one.

Q: Do you remember how you played when you were little?

A: When I went to school I was honest and quiet so I was loved by everyone. I liked singing very much. In those days playing games was popular. Teacher called me, "Maju Uemura, come here", and we used to play games.

Q: What kind of games did you play with your friends?

A: After I came home from school I played all kinds of games with my friends.

Q: Did you play in woods?

A: I am afraid of insects, so I did not go to woods much. I didn't even go tea picking when it was the season to pick tea. I am still afraid of insects so I do not pick tomatoes. My mother was the same way. My grandchildren took after me.

Q: What kind of things do you remember about your childhood?

A: When I grew older I attended a sewing school which was by the sea. When I saw the waves beat upon the seashore I could not keep my mind on the sewing as I wanted to swim. I was scolded by mother when I went home. She could tell that I sawam as my face was sunburned and my hair was sandy. When I saw the ocean I wanted to swim so badly that I could not sit still.

Q: About how old were you then?

A: I think I was around 13 then.

Q: Did you have friends?

A: Yes, I had 5 or 6 friends who said, "Let's swim". So as soon as the teacher left we jumped in the sea.

Q: Could you catch fish and shellfish?

A: Yes, we could catch shell fish in our village. Fishermen used to catch fish. As we were farmers we did not have time to go fishing so my mother used to buy fish from the fishermen.

Q: What other kind of things did you do for fun?

A: When 5 or 6 friends got together we played jump rope, baseball and all kinds of games. As there was a big open space in fromt of our house children gathered there and played baseball and hide and seek.

Q: How many years did you study sewing?

A: Until I came to America?

Q: How old were you when you came here?

A: I was 21 years old.

Q: Did you keep on going to sewing school everyday after you became older?

A: It was not a sewing school. About 10 girls went to the home of a sewing teacher in the village and learned sewing. I used to weave, too, when I was young. My older sister was a good weaver, so mother used to tell me that I should be able to weave as well as my sister did. I liked to weave, but Mother told me that the cloth I weaved lacked luster.

Q: Did you have fun during your girlhood?

A: My parents were strict and did not let me go to a theater with other girls. I did not do anything wrong, but they were strict. It is good here. If my grandchildren want to go to a show, my daughter-in-law will let them go, but in my time my parents said a girl should not go to such a place.

Q: Were you unhappy when you were told that you could not go?

A: If I was told that I could not go, I did not go even though I cried as I was naive. Some of my friends went even if they were told not to go.

Q: Did you associate with boys when you were young?

A: In Japan, especially in the country it was strict. I was told to go with an older person even to a bath-house at night. We did not do anything wrong but my parents were strict.

Q: Were there any young people who did something wrong?

A: Yes, there were. Two of my friends got in trouble. That is why my parents were strict.

Q: What kind of trouble did they get in?

A: They got pregnant without getting married.

Q: What had become of them?

A: They had abortion. I felt sorry for them.

Q: Did both of them have abortion?

A: I think one girl who lived two doors from my house had an abortion. Her family raised many silkworms, and this girl worked till late at night picking mulberry leaves for silkworms. I think her mother was not strict. She became friendly with a man who worked for her family. She became pregnant but they could not get married, so she had an abortion.

Q: What had become of that girl?

A: She married late because of that. The man was adopted into another family.

Q: Was the man from the same village?

A: Yes, he was, and he worked for the family.

Q: What else do you remember about your village?

A: In Japan when it does not rain for a long time, people beat the drums and pray for the rain. I used to go and watch it. It was very noisy. When laying foundation for schools or other buildings, the villagers gathered and pounded the ground. I used to volunteer to help. We pounded the ground keeping time with songs. It was fun.

Q: When you were young was there any young man you like?

A: No, there wasn't. I wanted to come to America, but my father tried to stop me saying, "If you stay in Japan you can find a good husband, so you don't have to go so far away." He was a man of old times so he must felt pity for me when I wanted to go on a trip. He stopped me, but my uncle said it would be good for young people to travel and work hard. That is why I decided to come here.

Q: How did you come to America? Was it by marriage?

A: Yes, it was a picture marriage.

Q: How were you matched?

A: My father-in-law's mother lived near my house. She said her grandson should take me as a wife so start arranging a marriage. I hear that is how I came here.

Q: Did Mr. Skaguchi send you a photograph of himself?

A: He used to come and visit his grandmother when he was little. My father told me that he was a bad boy when he was little, so I should not marry him as he might give me a hard time. I thought he might have been bad when he was little, but he might be good now. As I wanted to come to America I did not listen to my parent and came to America.

Q: Why did you want to come to America?

A: I thought America was a good country where I could make a lot of money and wear good clothes so I came here but it was my mistake.

Q: Who was the go-between?

A: Sakaguchi's aunt persuaded me to marry him. I said I might not be able to go as I had bad eyes, but she told me that if I go to the doctor my eyes would be all right, so I went to an eye doctor for a while. As it took so long to get my eyes cured my mother told me to give up going to America, but I did not want to give up after going to the eye doctor so long. Fortunately I passed the eye examination.

Although we had met when we were little, it was just like a picture marriage. When I arrived in port I wondered which man was my husband. I heard him shout' "Is Maju Sakaguchi there?", so I answered, "Here I am." He must have wondered how I looked like. In those days I was very fat weighing about 130 pounds. When we came home his friends asked him, "Did you meet your kami-san(wife)?" He answered, "Yes I did." "How was she? Was she fat or skinny?" they asked. "She was as fat as a ball" he answered. He was displeased

My husband had a strawberry ranch then. His face was red and full of pimples. I thought he was drunk, but I found out that his face was sunburnt from working outside.

Q: Were you 21 years old then?

A: Yes, I was.

Q: How old was your husband?

A: He was a year older than I, so I might have looked older than him as I was fat.

Q: How did you feel when you saw your husband for the first time?

A: I was surprised. I thought he would looked nice, but his face was sunburned as he worked in the country. One woman received a picture of her husband taken when he was young. When she arrived here the man who greeeted her was an old man so she was very disappointed. She did not say a word when she came out of the Angel Island. I felt sorry for her. I still wonder what had become of her. There were many women like her.

Q: Were there any picture marriages that did not go well?

A: Yes, there were. I heard some women went back to Japan without getting married. There was no such case on the ship I came on. Some women eloped with another man. It was pitiful for either husband or the wife. People nowadays are fortunate. They can associate with each other and get married if they want to, or don't get married if they don't want to. But the picture marriage did not have such freedom.

Q: The picture bride could not go back to Japan, couldn't they?

A: No, they could not. They just tagged along with tears in their eyes. In the meantime children were born. Many people did not have a good time in their lives. My husband's parents and two sisters were here so I was loved by them. In those days there were many single men without families. My husband had a strawberry ranch when I came here.

Q: Where was that?

A: In San Jose. In those days we did not have a car. My sister-in-law's husband met me at the bus stop. When I asked where our house was, he told me that the house with the lights on was the house of my father-in-law whom I had never met. After we passed by my father-in-law's house there was a beautiful house with a pretty garden. When I asked where our house was, he pointed to the house in the prune ranch and said that was our house. I said, "Is that our house? It is in the wood, isn't it. " He said, "In America most houses are like that."

When we came to the house many elderly women were cooking in the washtub as they were going to have a party for me. I was surprised.

Q: What were they cooking?

A: They had turned bathtubs over and buring firewood under them and were cooking. I cannot forget how I was ~~very~~ embarrased as I was not pretty and was very fat. People used to say, "Mr. Sakaguchi's bride is very fat."

Q: Was his grandmother there then?

A: Yes, his grandmother and grandfather were there. He was summond by his parents and so were his sisters, so it was a big family.

Q: Around what year was that?

A: His mother and sisters came about 3 years before I did.

Q: What year did you come to America as a bride?

A: I came here in 1916.

Q: Did you go to San Jose?

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Was your husband a sharecropper then?

A: Yes, he was a sharecropper of strawberry.
My husband's grandparents, parents, sister-in-law with 2 children were living in the same house. It was a big family but I became homesick and wanted to go home many times.

Q: Did you want to cry?

A: Yes, I did. I didn't know which direction Japan was, but I faced north and cried many a times. As my husband had many sisters he was not too kind to me. We never went anywhere together.

Q: What was the hardest experience?

A: I came to America thinking it was a good place, but it wasn't.
I thought I was punished for coming to America disobeying my parents.

Q: You worked, didn't you?

A: Yes, of course. I worked everyday pulling weeds between strawberry. The days were long. In Japan we took a rest after working for a while, but over here farmers did not take any ~~rest~~ break until noontime, so it was hard.

Q: What was your impression of San Jose when you first went there?

A: I was not used to the work, so even after someone taught me how to do it, it did not work well. Yet I worked hard thinking I had to do what others are doing, and finally I became good at the work. I don't know how many times I was scolded by my husband. He used to holler at me, "Hurry up we have to ship them!" We took the strawberry to the Farmers' Association. People worked fast as they were used to the work. I was very slow so I was ashamed of myself.

Q: Did all the members of your family live in one small house?

A: Yes, there were 3 rooms downstairs, and we slept upstairs. In those days the houses in strawberry ranch was made of rough board with newspaper or magazines pasted on the back. I was very surprised as I thought people lived in nices houses in America. In Japan we were farmers but we never lived in such a house. The beds were made of steel and had crude mattresses.

Q: About how many years did you live in San Jose?

A: We moved here when our son was about 4 years old, so I think we lived there for about 6 years.

My parents-in-law went back to Japan with our oldest daughter. When our son reached the school age, my husband thought he did not want to work for his father forever, so we went looking for a house and land and found this place. At first my husband and his brother-in-law bought 40 acres together. In those days produce was cheap, so we had a hard time. His brother-in-law did not like the hot weather so he went back to San Jose after about 3 years. We took over the brother-in-law's land. Since then things gradually got better.

Q: Do you remember about the Depression time?

A: Of course, I do.

Q: What do you remember about the Depression?

A: When we first came here there wasn't anybody to buy the grape after they were ripen. Our son was going to school, but we did not have money to buy bread much less meat, so we used to go to bank and borrowed money. We had good credit so they lend us money, but at one time they lend us only $50. I used that $50 very sparingly. I grew some plum on the edge of the ranch. One day while I was picking plum Mr. Kondo of Livingston passed by and asked me how many boxes of plum I could get. I said, "I don't know. We are in trouble because our water was cut off and we don't have anything to drink." Mr. Kondo then lend me some money telling me to pay the electric bill with it. We had such a hard time. We did not have money to buy clothes, so my husband wore his best suit for work. I did not do such thing because I wanted to save them for special occasions.

For my son'w school lunch I did not have jam to put on the sandwiches, so I put green tomatoe sauce on them, He told me that he did not like that kind of sandwiches, and that some children have meat in their sandwiches or bring fruits. I said, "If I have money I would like to do that, but as I don't have money you have to be contended with what I make." Nowadays we wrap sandwiches with wax paper, but in those days we did not have such thing so we wrapped sandwiches with Fresno newspaper.

My oldest son still recalls those days and says, "When I went to school I never took meat or fruit for lunch." Our second son did not experience such hardship. It is good to experience hardship. When you think about those days you can put up with anything even if you don't have money. I used to buy a small piece of meat, cut them into small pieces and cook them with carrots and cabbage to eat with rice. We were not the only ones who experienced hardship. Everybody had a hard time. Sansei do not believe us when we talk about such things. Children nowadays are brought up in luxury. Our children had only about 2 sets of school clothes, so I washed them and put them on. I was too busy to iron them. They wore the same clothes for years until they were too short for them. Our oldest daughter went to Japan with grandmother so she did not experience hardship, but our second daughter experienced hardship.

Q: When did you come here?

A: Around 1930.

Q: That Depression lasted for 2 to 3 years, didn't it?

A: Yes, it did. In 1930 I lost a child who was a year and 11 months old then. Things became better around 1933, but around 1932 was at the bottom of the Depression.

Side 2

Q: How did you manage to have a funeral for your child?

A: Everybody around here helped me. I was in the hospital for about 3 days. People sympathized with me and were very kind to me.

Q: In those days did you cut the grape and threw them away?

A: Yes, we did as we could not sell them. We had a truck so my husband put them on the truck and took them out to sell no matter how cheap they were. We could eat if we could get some money.

Q: How did you get rid of rabbits?

A: There were many rabbits around here. When the buds started coming out the rabbits ate them. We used to have a rabbit hunt. Thirty to forty people lined up and moved forward shooting the rabbits as they came out. We had stong wind which covered the grape plants. It was miserable. There was no shade, so we sat under the eaves of our small house. There was no coolers then. We made a tin box, put water in it and let the water go through a sack. We thought it was a good thing. We used to put a watermelon in it to make it cold.

Q: Did you recover since then?

A: Yes, we could sell grape. We made our living growing strawberry and carrots. We kept growing strawberry for many years until the war broke out.

Q: What did you think when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

A: I was surprised, and wonder what would happen?

Q: Where were you then?

A: I was here. My relatives and friends came from San Jose and San Francisco, and altogether 5 families lived in this house. They came here thinking they did not have to evacuate if they were here, but it was just the same here. When we left the house we put our valuables in a room and locked it, but when we came back a few months later we found the door broke open and all the good things such as my oldest daughter's wedding gifts were gone. We had a lot of rice, sugar and shoyu stored in the room. As sugar was rationed in the camp, we came to get it but it was gone by then. Mr. M_____ leased our house so it was not too bad, but some people had their stoves, refregerator and everything else stolen.

Q: Did you go to the assembly center in Merced at first?

A: Yes, we did.

Q: How did you feel when you entered there?

A: The buildings were low with tar paper on the roof. I cannot forget how hot it was then. It was so hot outside that if you stuck your face outside it felt as if it would be burned. I think it was hot because the barracks were close together. I felt miserable thinking how long we had to stay in such a place. As the latrines were far away we let little children go to tiolet in buckets. When the bell rang we went to mess hall with a tin tray and a cup to get our food.

Even if we didn't like the food we had to eat what was given or we would go hungry.

Q: What kind of difficulties did you have in Merced Center?

A: I think toilet was the biggest trouble. Our youngest son was about 9 years old.

Q: How about laundry?

A: We had hot water ready to be used for washing clothes, so we did not have any difficulties. It was better than living in the country. We had people cook for us so we had it easy in that respect. Food was good but I did not like something soupy like stew.

Q: Did you go from the Assembly Center to Amache?

A: Yes, we did.

Q: How did you get there?

A: The barracks were so crude that we could see the stars in the sky through the openings in the ceiling. It was so hot that my husband poured water on the cement floor and slept under the bed. He could not sleep all the time, so he was ordered to work using shovel or something. He used to complain that he never did that kind of work when he was home. They had baseball game and all kinds of entertainment and we used to go out every night.

Q; Was that in Merced or Amache?

A: That was in Amache, but once in a while we had entertainments in Merced, also. In Amache some people wanted to settle there for a long time.

Q:Were there questions about loyalty in Amache?

A: No, there weren't.

Q: Were you questioned which side you would be loyal to?

A: We were going to be loyal to America. There wasn't anybody against America over there. Amache was said to be the quietest camp. I heard that people in Tule Lake raised an uproar.

Q: What was your opinion about Nisei volunteering for the American military

A: Many people volunteered without any trouble. Two or three of them died.

Q: Were there any people who made some sarcastic remarks?

A: Yes, there were some who spoke ill of them behind their backs such as calling them "inu" (dogs) or unmentionable names. But we are indebted to those who volunteered

Q: Did you have any fun in the camp?

A: I was put to work in the mess hall from the day after we went to the camp. I was full of energy then. My oldest duaghter was pregnant so she did not work. After the baby was born they took good care of the baby. I think it would have cost a lot of money outside. They were given so much eggs and fruits that they could not eat all of them so the grown ups helped them eat.

Q: Was any of your children born in camp?

A: My oldest daughter had a baby in the camp. He was born on July 20. It was very hot, so she was full of heat rash even though she did not have any clothes on. He is 33 years old now and still single. He graduated from a school in Berkeley and went to Africa for about 3 years.

Q: Did he go there with the Peace Corp?

A: Yes, he did. He wanted to go back there, but we stopped him. He told me that children over there have very low intelligence. Some of them still write to him. He said they are very obedient.

Q: What kind of recollections do you have about the camp?

A: My husband worked as a policeman, and my sons were firemen. I worked at the mess hall until I left there.

Q: What kind of work do the policeman do?

A: A boy who came from Los Angeles was very cocky, so policemen were busy watching him.

Q: Did he do anything bad?

A: Yes, he did, so the policemen caught him and gave him a hard time.

Q: What kind of bad thing did he do?

A: I don't remember well, but he did bad things. He had dirty long hair. At one time policem caught him and beat him up.

Q: Didn't the policemen get the revenge?

A: They were waiting in the dark places for revenge, so the policeman could not walk alone. My husband told me after we left the camp that he used to go out to arrest people gambling in dark places. The gamblers hid when the policemen came. There were many policemen.

Q: Did the policeman work all day long?

A: I think they worked on shifts. Amache was such a cold place, that sometimes the breath froze. On the way back from the shower the towel froze like a board. It was such a cold place. Diapers and anything else we washed froze like board when we hang them to dry.

Q: What kind of sad experience did you have?

A: Four or five families lived together and they helped us, so we did not have difficulties or sad experience. Many people died in the camp.

Q: What kind of hobbies did you have?

A: After working several hours at the mess hall, I went to learn flower making and knitting. I should have learned English instead, but I didn't. I regret it now.

Q: What kind of things did your husband do?

A: When he was in Merced he worked as a laborer using shovels.

Q: What kind of hobbies did he have?

A: He learned <u>shigin</u> (recitation of Chinese poems) and made carvings. He made many carved articles but grandchildren took them.

Q: Was Amache in the desert?

A: Yes, it was. There were many cucti and rattle snakes there. One day when my husband and Mr. Hashimoto went to throw garbage they saw a rattle snake. They tried to catch the snake by one holding the head with a stick and the other holding the tail. My husband's stick broke and hurt his hand, but he was not bitten. They caught the snake, killed and dried it.

Q: Were there many rattlers?

A: I heard at Merced that some came in the room, but that kind of thing did not happen in our camp. There were some people who caught snakes as a job. One snake got away when a man brought it home and threw people into confusion. It was dangerous.

Q: Were you busy everyday?

A: Yes, I was. I had to go to the mess hall while people were still in bed. I did not want to go to work while others were playing. I had been busy at home, so I did not want to work hard in camp, too, but I couldn't help it. I started working the day after I entered the camp. Other people, also, worked as waitresses and dishwashers. We received only $16 a month for the work. The supervisors and even doctors received only $19. We did not need much money there because we were fed and everything was supplied. Only thing we spent money on was something like icecream.

Q: Were shoes supplied?

A: Yes, they were. They were not too godd, but shoes and clothes were supplied. I think it cost a lot of money to build barracks, dug wells and installed electricity in the wasteland where only sagebrush was growing.

Q: Did you make vegatable gardens there?

A: Not in the camp, but some people grew vegetableds outside the camp. We could not grow anything in the camp as we did not have water.

Q: Was your husband quite a big man?

A: He was a short man.

Q: To be a policeman .....

A: He was strong as he had a truck. My children are all fat, especially the second son wears an extra large shirt. Our oldest son went to the camp right after he graduated from a junior college in Modesto. The second son attended the City College in San Francisco after he came out from the camp. He went to the junior college with his wife and were married in the camp.

Q: How was the wedding in the camp?

A: We could not buy anything in the camp, so we went to a store in Amache. It was a very simple wedding.

Q: Did the bride have a wedding dress?

A: Yes, she did. Nowadays we give nice wedding presents to others, but at that time a pillow case was the best present they received. He was the first one to get married in the camp. A few months later

they went to Denver, and came back here after the war ended. They are living in a small house there. They have 4 childen. The one in highschool is the youngest. The oldest is in Los Angeles working in a hospital. Their second daughter is studying to be a pharmacist. The third son is attending a school in Fresno. He helps my husband and works hard. As we have a big farm just the hired hands cannot do all the work.

Q: When did you leave the camp?

A: I think it was in August. When the war ended we had to leave the camp, so we left and came back to our home.. Some people did not have anything even after they came home. As the Farmers' Association had a machine to dry gape, they went there and worked. They cooked at church as we did in camp and ate there. When they were ready to go home they went home.

Q: Did anybody live in your house?

A: A truck driver was living here. We were afraid the house would be dirty, but it was tidy. At Mr. Kajioka's house the stove, refregeator and almost everything was gone.

Q: Your personal belonging you stored here were gone, weren't they?

A: We don't know who took them. At one time when my husband and Mr. Hashimoto came to see the house from the camp our oldest daughter asked them to bring her wedding presents back, but found out they were gone so she was disappointed. When we went to camp we could take only a few belongings.

Q: Could you move in your house right after you came back?

A: Yes, we could. As we did not have any vegetable, we got some onion and tomatoe from Filippinos and ate them.

Q: What kind of ranch did you have then?

A: Our ranch was still there. At that time the price of grape was good. Before we went to camp we owed banks money, but we paid them off and we still had money left. Since then things became better. As the price of produce gradually became higher, we had money to spare so we bought some more land. Before we went to camp we didn't even have spending money. We were miserable. People who worked as farm laborers must have some spending money, but we didn't have any money. When we came back there were about 20 acres of Tokay grape, and one acre produced about 30 tons, and one ton was sold for about $100, so it came to a lot of money. Mr. M._____ got the money.

Q: Do you still have the grape?

A: No, we don't. We cut them down and planted almond and peach.

Q: Did you experience difficulties when you came back?

A: No, we didn't.

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S: I used to get up around 3 o'clock in the morning and worked till about 9 0'clock. It was so hot that I was full of sweat. I worked just as hard as men. About 4 Indians were working here, so around 9 0'clock we gave them beer. They were very glad to drink the beer.

Q: Around what time did they start working?

A: They, too, started working around 3 O'clock. They worked hard. Our children were still too young to help. The oldest was married but he had never farmed so he didn't help.

Q: What time did you go back to work after 9 O'clock break?

A: After 9 O'clock We stayed in the house and did not work outside. We work from 3 O'clock in the morning so we work quite a long time. We were tired,

Q: You cooked, too, didn't you?

A: Yes, I had to.

Q: What about night time?

A: We get up early in the morning, so we took bath and went to bed early. May be because I worked so hard that my back is bent now.

Q: What kind of work did you do?

A: I picked strawberry, and I had to cook, too. Farm laborers wemt back when the time came. After that we had to irrigate the field. My husband had a truck and we had two regular hired hands. I was busy cooking and giving bath to children who came home muddy. A man named Yasu worked here. When he had too much to drink he would go to sleep. I asked him to give children baths every night. My second son used to say, "Yasu-san let's take a bath". Then he would reply, "Makoto-san, please wait for a while." I felt sorry for him. After he drank at our house he would go out to drink what he had brewed. He drank extra sake so he was drunk.

Q: Did Issei men gamble around here?

A: People around here were serious so they didn't. One man who worked at our house liked to gamble. The other man liked to drink, so he didn't gamble. The one who liked to gamble went to Chinese gambling houses all the time.

Q: Were there Chinese gambling houses around here?

A: He used to go to Stockton. He had about 4 children, but even when he didn't have food to eat he would go gambling and lose money. Then his wife would send a child to our house saying, "As Papa doesn't come home we don't have anything to eat, so please lend us money."

Q: Did he own land?

A: No, he was a farm laborer. His children were too young to work, and his wife could not work because she had children. He went to gamble to make money but he lost money. I don't think Niseis did such thing. Some Issei men were very bad. My husband used to tell him that he should think about his wife and children, but he kept on gambling trying to make money. I think he was greedy.

Q: Were there many such people among the farm laborers?

A: Yes, there were many such people in those days.

Q: There were many single men, weren't there?

A: Yes, there were. I think people may become like that if they don't have a business of their ow.. If they don't have work they gamble to make money and lose it.

Q: Wasn't there any Chinese gambling house around here?

A: No, there wasn't.

Q: Were the residents around here mostly Japanese?

A: Yes, they were.

Q: Were there any Chinese?

A: No, there wasn't. In those days the laborers were Japanese and Filipinos. When there was no work, one laborer went to Stockton to gamble at Chines gambling house and didn't go home for a week to two weeks. I felt sorry for his wife who had a baby but did not have money to milk. She sent her son to our house asking for money to buy milk. When I went to see the baby, it looked as if it was going to die as it did not have milk to drink. As I had plenty of milk in those days I breast fed the baby. When the baby became full it cied. The mother cried and said, "Now that the baby had milk it has strength to cry." People around here helped the family by taking rice, potatoe and other things. The wife told me that she had to burn the steaming basket as she did not have fuel to warm the house. I felt sorry for her. Some people took some fuel and others took some rice.

Q: Was her husband gone?

A: He went to a Chinese gambling house and did not go home, so his friend went to get him saying, "How can you gamble here when your children are starving." It is pitiful when husband is not home. She was from Kumamoto Prefecture.

Q: Were there many such cases?

A: Yes, there were. A man from Kagoshima was quite old and had arthritis so he could not work well, but he drank a lot. His wife was young so she worked hard and wanted to go to a movie once in a while or buy something nice, but he counted the money at home and said the money was short. His wife said to my husband crying, "Mr. Skaguchi, please don't give my husband all the money because he doesn't give me a penny. After her husband died, her son who was 5 or 6 when they went to camp has been good to her. They live in an apartment in San Francisco now.

Q: How old was that man?

A: He was around 70 years old.

Q: About how old was his wife?

A: She was his second wife, so she was only about 55 years old. She was a small woman. Last year she came back to Cortez and said , "I am very much obliged to you at Cortez". As her husband could not work well nobody hired him for farming. We let them stay in a small house we had. They had 5 or 6 children but they were all good.

Q: How did they make a living?

A: Before they came to Cortez they lived in Livingston and he worked as a vegetable farmer, but as he was not a good worker I think he was fired. He was a good worker but as he had arthritis he could not work well. Fortunately his sons helped him. One of them went to school and became a plumber so he made good money.

Q: Do you have any other recollection of Isseis?

A: There were 5 or 6 people who worked here. One of them was Mr. Hashimoto from the same prefecture as ours. He was as dark as a Black man. Mrs. Hashimoto was a very gentle person and could never talk back to her husband no matter what he waid. One day they came here from San Jose to get some peaches during the peach season. They packed a suitcase full of peaches and went back home that night. The next morning the husband did not get up, so his wife went to see him and found him dead in bed. I cald not believe my ears when I received a phonecall telling me that Mr. Hashimoto had passed away. He was happy the day before distributing manju (pastries) to people whom he felt a debt of gratitude. When we went to his home people were saying, "It was a good way to go, but hard for people who are left behind." They had 3 children. One of them is married to Mr. Enomoto who is the head of JACL.

Q: Isseis worked hard, didn't they?

A: Yes, we worked hard. People say our back hurt because we worked hard when we were young. I had been driving a car around Cortez without a license, but my son being worried about me getting in an accident sold it to an Indian who did not own a car. Since then I cannot go anywhere as I do not have a car.

Q: Around what time did you go to bed when you were young and worked?

A: I could not go to bed too early as I had to wash and iron clothes.

Q: Did you used to go to bed around 10 O'clock?

A: I think I went to bed around 10 O'clock. At strawberry season we worked hard.

Q: Didn't you get sick working too hard?

A: I didn't get sick. I took care of the garden all by myself. I was growing a lot of vegetables.

Q: How was the soil around here?

A: I don't know if it true or not but people told me that the soil here is the best. I grow a lot of cucumber to give to my daughter, son and to people from San Francisco and Los Angeles. They are very glad to get them but I am the only one who works. I think I enjoy doing it. People say I am healthy because I work.

Q: Are you the oldest among the women around here?

A: I am the oldest woman in the church. Mrs. Kajioka celebrated her 88th birthday last year. I am the second oldest. My back is bent but I can do anything. I cut the weeds with a hoe because if we use weed killer nothing will grow there.

Q: Do you reminisce often?

A: I went back to Japan last year. I have a nephew who is farming there. He has 3 daughters. The youngest daughter is graduated from a college this year. When I asked her if she wanted to come to America, she said she wanted to.

Q: Did you work hard after you came back from the camp?

A: No, I didn't work much after I came back from the camp. I just worked hitting walnuts. Filippinos and Mexicans picked grapes. There were mostly grapes and no peach, so there was hardly any work for women. Before we went to camp we grew strawberry, onion and carrots. We sold only about 20 to 30 dozens carrots and made spending money. After we came back from camp we did not grow such vegetables. We had more money coming in from grape so we were better off. On Wednesdays and Sundays we went to church. On Thursdays my husband and I used to go fishing. He did something he liked to do for a couple of years, so when he died I didn't have any regret.

Q: When did he passed away?

A: He passed away 8 years ago in 1968. He did not have any pain but he complained about constipation, so he went to a chek-up. I think the doctor knew he had cancer but he did not say so until my husband saw a specialist. When the specialist checked him he said he had to operate my husband right away. When he operated my husband he found out that my husband's liver was full of cancer. I was disappointed. I wanted Rev. Nakamura to pray for him before the operation so I called him but he had gone to Livingston for the New Year's prayer meeting. I called everybody but I could not get hold of anybody until I called Mr. Kajiwara's brother who got hold of Rev. Nakamura. Unfortunately Rev. Nakamura did not have a car with him, so by the time he arrived here the doctor had operated him. Since then he had been unconscious. As he did not know he was going to die he did not even have a will.

Q; Did he pass away in that condition?

A: He groaned with pain for about 3 days and then passed away. If he had any pain before we would have taken him to a doctor earlier and he might have lived a little longer.

Q: How old was he then?

A: He was 73 years old. He used to go everywhere with Rev. Nakamura. He never missed going to church.

Q: You must have missed him then, didn't you?

A: Yes, it was an undescribable feeling. One of my grandchildren came and stayed with me for about a month. I told her that she had better go back to her mother. She asked me if I am all right, so I told her that I am all right. Then she went home. God is with me so I am not lonely.

Q: Do you go fishing by yourself?

A: No, I don't. My sons took me fishing a couple of times, but it was more fun going fishing with my husband. I used to catch a big fish and got my husband angry. I got that television as a first prize for catching a big fish.

Q. What is your name?

1)* AM. My name is Shigeru Mayeda (Mr.).

Q. When were you born?

AM. I was born in 1902. So I'm 72 years old.

Q. Where were you born?

AM. Nigata Ken. Well, I was born in Hawaii. I was there till I was 6 years old. But I was sent back to Japan to learn Japanese. I finished elementary school, 6 years, and attended 3 more years of middle school. After that I came back to the U.S.A.

Q. Well then you must feel more comfortable in English than in Japanese.

AM. No. I'm not good in English. I did study English, but once I got used to Japanese, I could not get out of it. It's because pronunciation is so different. But when I came to Fresno to go to school, there were very few Japanese there. So I had to learn to live with whites when I came back to the U.S.A. I went to Utah, first.

Q. What did you do there?

AM. I worked in the railroad. It was not an easy job. I had an opportunity to visit Japan in 1942.

Q. Right before the war?

AM. Yes. It was. I stayed there for 3 months. I got married and brought back my bride to America. I went Loomis first. I farmed there. It was the time when Japanese could not lease land, but I had a citizenship so I was able to buy and lease land. I also let my friends use my name to buy

and lease land. I also let my friends use my name to buy land. However, several years later I moved out of there because I was afraid because I thought it was illegal. I sold my land there. At that time I heard that Mr. Abiko was selling land in Cortez. So I bought about 20 acres where there was a small ditch. We moved over here and began to farm. It was the time when Cortez Church still had that small manse. Later I joined Cortez Christian Church with my wife. I was a church member in Cortez. Well, actually another reason why I moved to Cortez was because a child was born to us, and I wanted to settle down someplace and raise children. The land I bought in Cortez used to belong to an old man. He could not keep up with his work so he decided to give it up. I was able to buy it very cheap.

My wife died when she gave birth to the third child. She was not very healthy. We had a funeral service in this church, though the building was an old and smaller one. I raised 3 children by myself as I farmed. When they grew up and became independent, one went to Fresno and began gardening. He quit that lately and began to buy and sell stocks. The other son is in Los Angeles. My daughter is in Cortez. She is married and I live with her family. I did not want to go to Los Angeles. I sold my house and bought a mobile house. I'm retired now and doing nothing.

Q. Now that everybody is here. I would like you to tell me your names.

AK. My name is Kajioka. I was born in Fukui Ken. It was a quiet countryside.

Q. It is a snow country isn't it?

AK. Yes.

Q. When were you born?

AK. Thirtieth year of Meiji. I'm 76 years old now. When I was 20, I came to Watsonville from Japan. I've been here in Cortez for 53, 54 years. It must have been 1919 when I came to Cortez.

Q. Did you come to the U.S. as a bride?

AK. Yes.

Q. What is your name?

AYO. My name is Mrs. Mai Yoshioka.

Q. Where did you come from?

AYO. I came from Niigata Ken, but I was married to a man who is from Fukuoka. And in fact I was born in Hawaii.

Q. Oh, then you are Nisei. Do you feel freer in English than in Japanese?

AYO. No. It was the thing of the past. My father was "Yoshi". He had to inherit the family tradition and continue family name. So he had to go back to Japan. Naturally I was brought back to Japan with him. We were supposed to come back here in 3 years, but things did not go the way we planned.

Q. So you were born in Hawaii.

AYO. Yes. I was brought back to Japan when I was 3 years old.

Q. When did you come to Cortez?

AYO. I came here in 1920. My husband come to America in 1909. He came here in 1919 to look over the land.

Q. When you came to the U.S.A., where was your husband?

AYO. He was in Watsonville.

Q. Then you know Kenzo Yoshida.

AYO. Yes. I know him well. My husband knew him well, too. He also knew Mr. Shikuma well. My brother was in the same class with his son.

Q. What is your name?

4) AS. My name is Mrs. Maju Sakaguchi.

Q. What is the meaning of your name?

AS. Well, my name was given to me in Japan so I don't know.

Q. Where were you born?

MAJU SAKAGUCHI

AS. Kumamoto Ken.

Q. When were you born?

AS. I was born in 28th year of Meiji (1895).

Q. When did you come here?

AS. I came to the U.S.A. in 1915 and I came to Cortez in 1923. I came to San Jose first. I lived there for 6 years before I came here.

Q. Your husband was farming in both places, is that right?

AS. Yes. Thirteen families came to Cortez in the beginning. At that time there was nothing here. My husband and I came right over there across the railroad with my uncle.

Q. What is your name?

* AYA. My name is Mrs. Akio Yamamoto, and I'm from Yamaguchi Ken.

Q. When were you born?

AYA. I was born in 1902.

Q. When did you come to the U.S.A.?

AYA. 1920.

Q. Did you come to Cortez right away?

AYA. No. I went to Salinas first. I came here in 1924. So I have been here just about 50 years.

Q. What is your name?

6) ✗ ANS. My name is Saburo Narita.

Q. Where were you born?

ANS. Kanagawa Ken.

Q. When were you born?

ANS. October 5, 1903.

Q. When did you come over here?

ANS. I came over here in 1921.

Q. Where did you live first?

ANS. Alameda County. My parents were there. So I am "yobiyose".

Q. When did you come to Cortez?

ANS. It was 1933. I came here in October and was married in December 10th.

Q. How about you?

7) ✗ ANH. My name is Mrs. Haruko Narita. I was born in Miye Ken.

Q. When were you born?

ANH. I was born in 1914.

Q. When did you come over here?

ANH. I was 10 months old when I was brought to the U.S.A.

Q. What did your father do?

ANH. He was farming in Fremont.

Q. Then he came to Cortez.

ANH. Yes, in 1919. I think it was in December.

Q. Then you met your husband here.

ANH. Well, my husband came here later.

ANS. My wife's father was really a pioneer. You see, her family were all girls, except her father, of course. Their neighbor asked me one day if I would like to move up here to help the family. So I decided to come up here and I got married to Haruko. Until then I was farming in Fremont. I was working in ranches.

Q. Now that I got to know all of you, I would like to ask you all kinds of questions. Things like precise dates were not that important. I am interested in your experiences and things happened in the past. What I like to know is your experiences, joyous, sad, tragic, and all these things which affected your life very deeply. I am going to record them and translate them and make them available for Sansei and Yonsei. So I would like you to tell me as much as you can, as informally as you wish.

A few minutes ago someone said that Cortez was started by 13 families.

AK. No. It was 11 families in the very beginning. I always carry that information, but I seem to left it at home today (laughs). 1919 was the beginning year. Do you remember who they were?

ANH. They were Kubo's, Grandpa Kajioka and his sons, Murofuji's, Naritas, Yuges, Kuwahara's, Nakamura's.

Q. What was the reason why they came to settle in Cortez?

AK. You see we were in Watsonville and Hollister a few years before we came here. Anyway he always said, "If we work with lettuce and strawberries all the time, we have to move around. When children become school age, they must change schools all over the place. One month in this school and next month that school. We don't make much money now. Even if we have to work harder, we will do so to save money and settle down in some place so that we can send kids to school to the same school all the year around." This was my husband's wish. That's why we came here and settle down.

Well, it was alright to come here, but it was very hard. The only thing which kept us going was our wine grapes. When spring came, we planted onions and strawberries and all kinds of things.

Q. You know that Livingston was started as a colony. Was it the same with Cortez?

AK. There was no relationship between Livingston and Cortez.

AYO. Though it was through different procedures, both groups were promoted by Mr. Abiko and Mr. Shimanouchi. Mr. Shimanouchi was a newspaper writer. My husband used to know him well.

AM. Well, by the time we came here Livingston Colony was already in progress.

ANS. Livingston Colony was started in 1913, so we got started 6 years behind.

Q. The World War I was in 1918, wasn't it? When you got

started here, America was in a good economic condition.

ANS. When they (Japanese farmers in Cortez) came here they had a little money. You see they made money during the war, and that's why they were able to buy land here. Though I was not here in the beginning, I heard many stories about this. These people who made money during the war did not go back to Japan. Instead, they were advised by Mr. Abiko to buy land in Cortez-Livingston Area. So they came here, instead of going back to Japan. There were those who did go back to Japan. But people here are those who wanted to settle down and send kids to the same school, so that they did not have to keep changing schools every year. Kids would have to change schools every so often if you were share-croppers. So they bought their own land here and settled down.

However, when they came here and settled down, they faced Depression. It was the time when they were ready to produce grapes. It took just about that long to cultivate this wilderness.

Q. What happened during the time of Depression?

ANS. We grew strawberries, eggplants, vegetables, as much as we could, as far as water could reach. We had grapes, but we had to live till grapes were ready. So we had to have these vegetables and others which grew fast. You see, when we bought the land, we could not pay it off all at once. We had to make payments every month.

ANH. We took a mortgage. But before we could pay it all off, we had to go to Fresno and make new contract to extend

the mortgage. My father had to go down there 3 times to change the contract.

ANS. Mr. Yoneyama, Mr. Yoshida, and my father-in-law had to go down to Fresno many more times than that. You see, I came here 13 years after the colony was established and they were still struggling with the same mortgage. It was 7% and was very expensive. We could not pay the principle. We had to pay interest on the interest. So it was very difficult. It was the time of President Hoover, and the time of prohibition. So we could not sell wine grapes. That's why it was very difficult.

On top of that we could not sell anything. For example, Mr. Kono sold grapes for juice, but he could not collect money from the company. Early that year, some of the grapes froze, so people brought something to eat for us. But by the end of the year those people who tried to help us earlier had to be helped.

AYO. We had to cut off ripe grapes in order to trim the vines. We also sent grapes to the East, but they could not sell them either. So they charged us $400 to dump them. We really suffered a lot to pay this $400 off.

Q. Why is it that you had to pay $400?

AYO. Well, you know, we were asking them to sell grapes for us. So when the grapes were not sold, we had to pay for the shipping and dumping costs. It was the same story with everyone around here. The time was 1930, 31, and 32. Banks were closed and money could not be withdrawn.

Q. I would like to go back a bit. You could not buy land could you?

ANS. Well, the late Mr. Calding, a lawyer made a suggestion that if we buy a land in the name of Nisei children then it was possible for us to buy land. Nisei were citizens and they had a right to do so. So each family became a cooperation and each children owned stocks of the family land, and parents were workers for them. We had to show these things on the paper. They say there were loopholes in law and this family cooperation was legally acceptable. So that's how we were able to buy land. Parents were just consultants and caretakers.

Q. When you came back from the camp, a law was passed which in effect said that since Nisei were too small to earn enough money to buy land and in fact was bought for them by alien parents who bought the land. So it was against the spirit of the alien land law. So Nisei were not to inherit the land. Did you have any problems in regard to this law? It must have taken place around 1948 years in San Diego. One Nisei owned land was being taken away from him. Do you remember anything like that?

ANS. Yes. I kind of remember that. It was a test case. It also happen to Fujita brothers in Petaluma. They won the case though. Their parents bought the land in their name. Fortunately they won the case. So there was no more problem afterwards.

Q. You must suffer a lot before the depression, about the time you began to cultivate Cortez. What do you remember

most?

ANS. I remember the year when my father died. It was 1931. In the fall grapevine must be trimmed and we had to cut off ripe grapes from the vine. I remember that well. It was so tragic, because we lost our father that year. I was the first of 7 girls. I had to quit going high school because I had to help my mother. I was 2nd year in high school. The other girls were able to graduate from high schools. It was a very difficult year for us. We could not sell even half of grapes the year after. The rest were wasted.

Q. You must feel really bad about the fact that you had to quit school.

ANH. Oh yes. But we had to eat before we were able to go to school so...

Q. Your father passed away leaving wife and 7 daughters.

ANH. Yes.

Q. How were you able to make living?

ANH. Well, even if we were girls, we all worked in the field, worked with a horse and plowed the soil. We did everything that man did.

ANS. Well, they did everything, got a horse ready to plow, made ditches to draw water. I came here two years after (her father died). It was a sandy land and even if I pulled a horse and plow to make ditches, the small banks collapsed. On top of that it was very hot.

ANH. My husband came from a very cool place, so it was very hard for him.

ANS. During the summer I used to have a towel ... around my neck. I could not eat lunch because it was so hot. However, I came here during winter, so I got used to it gradually. I was in Alameda County, and it was a very cool place. I did not know what it means to be in a hot weather there. It never went up over 80°. But here it was over 100°.

We used to use 8 - 10 inch pipes to lead water. They got so hot and even if I handled them with gloves, I burned my hands and shoulders. We don't use these pipes any more though. I was able to work continuously because I was young.

AK. The thing I cannot forget was the whirlwind. It used to come to Cortez. One day I was weeding a whirlwind came and if I did not grab onto something I would have been thrown up in the air. So I hung onto the root of grapevine. I remember well. There are anymore of these things anymore. Wind was very bad here. Even if you lay down a child in a house, we had to put up a mosquito net. Otherwise sand would fall on the child. If you had a nice and sturdy house, then it would be a different story. Our house was such a bad house. It was a rebuild barn, so the things were very bad. I felt very sorry for children. Now, there is no whirlwind or sandy wind. So it's like a paradise now.

ANS. When I came here there were lots of uncultivated land and there were not very many trees. They planted lots of rye in this area. But again there were lots of wilderness in

this area. The wind was so bad that the land I had plowed turned flat. I had to repeat it all over again. The strong wind blows in March. They used to say that sand buried chickens when the wind blew. It really was a desert.

AK. Yes, indeed. When it got hot one could make a hard boiled eggs in the sand. These things happened many times.

AYO. The wind blew so hard that if you put down boxes of grapes you could not find them later, be moving sand covered them up. Well, prople who had sandy land suffered a lot. Mr. Narita and my husband had to put up fence so that jack-rabbits would not eat up young trees. Once a year we had to hunt for rabbits. There were lots and lots of them.

ANS. Our cultivation was extraordinary. It was just like being left out in a desert and we had to survive there. In the beginning all of us were thinking about our children, sending them to one school and all, but there were those who did not make it. Those people abandoned farming and left. There were also those who put a down payment on a land. But when they saw the siruation here, it was so bad that they gave up settling down here immediately, even though they could not recover the down payment. It was very good now, but at that time no one would imagine that things can be like this. It's just like dream now. Nisei raise their children in air conditioned houses, but we could not even think about these things at that time. Our house was built by 1X12 and it was just like those for horses. When the wind blew sand used to fall inside of the

house and we had to cover everything so that the sand would not get in our bed and food. In any case it was that bad, but most of these people here endured it.

AYO. My husband and I discussed about leaving home many times. We had boys in our family and since we decided to settle down here for their educations sake, we decided to stay here and fight it out.

Q. Cortez began with 11 families, but the number of families here did increase. Is that right?

AK. One family moved in a year after we came here, then 2-3 years after another family came. It was like that. So we have quite a few families now.

ANH. Mrs. Kajioka, you came here before us. Didn't you?

AK. We came here in November.

ANH. Well then, you must have come here about one year earlier than we did.

ANS. No, your family came here about one month earlier than them. I heard that the first family who came here was the Morofujis.

AYO. Right. They bought Hakujins (white people's) house here. Then, we came. We built our own house.

Q. So then, these 11 families did not come here at the sametime, but they were here within a period of one year.

AK. Well, these 11 families came here just about the same time. I'd say it was within a period of a few months.

Q. Did these families know each other before they came here?

ANS. No. We came here from all kinds of different places. One came from Watsonville. My wife's family came from Fremont. Kuwaharas came from Berkeley. Yoshioka's were from Mountainview. They used to grow strawberries there. Mr. Tsuruta and Mr. Shimanouchi went around

Japanese communities selling land in Cortez. Mr. Ahiko used to own this land, all of it. He, then sold portions of it to Japanese people.

Q. Was there any experience of discrimination?

AM. When we bought the land, each family created a cooperation. Before the war our children were too young to buy land. So we had to set up cooperations, and we spent lots of money for it.

Q. I heard that someone shot a bullet into a house owned by a Japanese family. Do you remember that?

AM. Oh yes. It was when the war began. But when we moved here there was no such thing. There were those who threw rocks at Japanese in Turlock. But things like that did not happen in Cortez. There was an incident in Cressey where a group of Japanese workers were thrown out of the town. However, Cortez was a very peaceful town, though there were some incidents of violence during the war. It was toward the end of war when some Japanese people came back to see the condition of this church and their houses.

ANS. It was the time when the war was coming to an end, and Japanese were allowed to come back to the West Coast. These people came back here to see the situation in Cortez and lived in a vacant parsonage of the Cortez Presbyterian Church. The gunshot incident happened at that time. Some white people were accepting us, but there were those who did not want us to come back.

During our evacuation Mr. Momburg was hired as a manager of our farms. He handled the contracts with those who farmed on our land.

Q. How did you feel when Pearl Harbor was attacked by the Japanese? What did you think?

AM. At that time we had an older parsonage. Mr. Yuge, Mr. Yamamoto and myself were supposed to fix the roof on the parsonage. It was Sunday and we were coming back to church to work in the afternoon. So we went back home for lunch. When I came home my children said, "Papa! Japanese are bombing Pearl Harbor!" I was so surprised by that news that I forgot about fixing the roof completely.

Well, by the time President Roosevelt began to speak on the radio, I remembered about fixing the roof. I worried about these men, but I also wanted to hear what the President had to say. Later I returned to the church. They were waiting for me on the roof. So I said, "Oi. It's a war! It's a war! It's going to be very bad." They said, "Where? Where?" So I said, "It's between Japan and America!" Mr. Yuge said, "My knee is shaking very badly and I can't get off the roof. Help me!" So Mr. Yamamato took his hand to help him to get down from the roof. They were crying. They said, "well, they had to do it, ha?" We forgot about fixing the roof for a few days. We fixed it though later, because it was leaking very badly.

ANS. It was the time when we were harvesting carrots. When I took some carrots to a shed, people said, "They did it! They did it!" It meant that Japan attacked Peal Harbor. There were many people working there.

ANH. Well, Philipinos were on a sit down strike. They said we would not be able to pay for their labor. So they did not want to work. Banks stopped dealing with Japanese, so they thought they would never get paid. Well, buyers decided to pay for them, so they went back to work.

Q. How soon did you have to evacuate after that?

ANH. The Pearl Harbor attack was on December 7, and we were evacuated in May. It was on May 13th, right in the middle of the strawberry season. It was such a busy season; there was a funeral, we had to pick strawberries and we had to pick.

AM. It was such a beautiful crop of strawberries we had. We used to look down on people from Arkansas, but these beautiful strawberries became theirs after all.

Q. During those five months, you were forbidden to go far away from your houses?

AYO. Well, it was just for Issei. Nissei were able to go farther, though. But they, too, were limited in their area of activity.

Q. You were Nissei, weren't you?

AYO. Yes, but I married a Japanese man.

Q. Then, you could not move around as freely as you wished.

AYO. No. I could not.

Q. What kind of hardship did you go through?

AM. Well, the only thing was that we could not go out for shopping. However, we had a friend who went around buying everything we wanted for us. We were so shocked by the news of the war that those limitations put on us were really minor things.

One thing I remember is that Mr. Iino died and we were allowed to go to the burial ground. My daughter Lily drove the widow's car and she took us to the gravesight. I suppose we got a permit to go to Merced.

Q. Where did you go first when you were evacuated from Cortez?

AM. We went to Merced. You know we were all together, friends and all.

We were rather noisy and talkative. It wasn't that bad. They fed us, too.

AYO. You know the houses we lived in Merced were stables. When it rained it leaked and our beds and everything got wet. It got also muddy. It got muddy in our bedroom as well.

AM. The soil there was not sandy like ours here. It was a real fine soil, mud. It was also slippery when it got wet. On top of that once it got wet, it did not dry up quickly. It was very hard. However, we did not worry about food. There were some Issei who could not eat Japanese food, so it was very hard for some Issei. We ate baloney, weinies, cheese, cow's tongs, and all these weird things. Issei just looked at them and walked away. This period of time was very short, soon we could eat meat and better food.

Q. I would like to go back a few years. You were Christians by that time.

AYO. Yes, of course.

Q. When was this church built?

AK. About 50 years ago. When we came here there was no church. So we met under the trees. My uncle's house was just like church. We worshiped there.

Q. Were you Christians when you came to Cortez?

AK. Yes. I was in Watsonville first. I became a Christian there.

Q. How about the other people?

ANH. We were baptized after we came here.

Q. This church was built after you came here, of course.

AK. Yes. It was in my old house where Ha uko san's mother was baptized.

It's a real run down house.

ANH. Was my father and mother baptized at the same time?

AK. I really don't remember which was first. It was an evangelist from Japan who baptized her.

Q. When was this church built?

AK. The old church was built fifty years ago.

Q. Then it must have been sometime around 1923-24.

AK. Yes. Many of our old people passed away and ladies are the only ones left. But they were very enthusiastic about church. They all came to church and prayer meetings every week.

Q. Livingston Yamato Colony was built by Christians. Was it the same with Cortez?

AK. No. It wasn't. In fact there were more Buddhists than Christians here.

AM. There were some problems between Buddhists and Christians. It was about this building. It used to be used by both groups. Well, I'm talking about the old building which was torn down when we built this one. Funeral services, both Christians and Buddhists were conducted here. At that time buildings were very hard to get. So the argument was whether the building belonged to Christian Church or Buddhist Church. Well, you know Buddhist people drank liquors and got more courageous. It was such a big happening. Well, you know Christians did not drink, but the argument continued all night till next morning. All of them were sitting and arguing. There was no conclusion.

Q. Did Christians build the hall?

AM. Well, the building was really built by both groups. We all chipped in to buy materials and everyone came to build it. So both groups

felt the building was their own. It really belonged to both groups.

Q. When you left for Merced (because of the evacuation) what did you do with your possessions?

AYO. We all asked Mr. Momburg to keep them for us. We got together with Livingston people. Some people asked their white friends and some brought their things to the church.

Q. How about your land?

AK. Mr. Momburg took care of them. We took all our equipments to the shed.

Q. When you came back to Cortez, did you find everything you left here?

AK. Well, everybody said that most of their possessions were gone. All the attachments to the tractors and tools were stolen. I did take everything I could. But things which I could not take were brought to a storage house and locked the door. But the locks were no use. They broke in and took everything which were good and expensive.

ANS. There were some who brought their household goods to church.

AYO. I brought half of our things to a white church and half to our white friend. So we did not lose anything. Things which were brought to the church were safe because the minister was Asyrian. He put them all together and kept them for us. People who brought things to our church lost lots of their valuable things. However, that Asyrian was very good to us.

AYA. We put our important things in a room and locked the door. But the lock was no use. Things which were kept in individual houses were not safe at all. We had our wedding presents locked up in a room, but all were stolen.

AYO. We had a picture of Christ hanging on the wall, but even that was stolen. I was really surprised. They even stole God! It was such a big picture and I did not think they would steal it.

Q. You were sent from Merced to Amache, Colorado. When 7,500 people were thrown together in a small place, lots of things can happen. Kids could get in fights, people could turn against each other over small things. Do you remember anything like these that happened in the camp?

ANS. Our block was very peaceful, because everybody came from Cortez. There were very little problems. There were, of course, kids fighting. But that you can't help.

However, there were those who brought complaints against block managers. There were those who wanted to get better jobs and better food. I don't know whether or not these complaints could be dealt with. Other than that we heard very little problems. Of course we heard lots of problems in other blocks, though. I heard about adults fist fights. We never had such problems, because our block was just like family members.

ANH. My kids were so noisy that I felt so "kinodoku" (embarrassed). I knew it was very bothersome for my neighbors.

AYO. When we entered the camp, they gave us clothing. I was very surprised, and was pleased I might add.

ANS. I had a chance to go out of the camp, but my wife was very sick and my children were going to school. They were very small and needed much attention. So I worked in the messhall. Because in this way I could be around my kids. I just had to be there for certain period, and I could come home anytime I wanted to. I could watch my

kids and take care of my wife. So I stayed in the camp and did not take that opportunity to go out. When I was working in the messhall I had to get up by 3:00 am. By the time we washed up and arrived at the messhall it was already 4:00 am. When it snowed, it was cold and terrible.

AYO. It was very hard. We had to go to public washrooms to get washed up. When I came back into the room, I felt as if the skin of my face was pulling because of the coldness.

The thing which was most difficult for me was the fact that my son was drafted.

Two weeks after graduating from high school, he got a notice. Then one of our neighbors said, "Mrs. Yoneda, you must be out of your mind. You were put in the concentration camp as an enemy alien, but you are willing to send your son to the U.S. army. You must be really crazy!" He was really shouting at me.

So my husband told him, "We are here as enemy aliens and we don't want to send our sons to the war. We also told our son, "I cannot reconcile the fact that you are going to be drafted." (you see, our son was the first one to be drafted.) Then our son said, "I am very greatful that you raised me till this day. However, I was born in America and I owe a lot to this country. So I would like to go to the army. Please let me go."

We were really scorned by many people. It was the most difficult thing which happened to us in our entire life.

But we said to our son, "We understand you. I want you to do whatever you feel right. If you want to be loyal citizen of the U.S.A. and be patriotic, we think it is a very good thing." So we gave our

blessings and sent him out.

My son left the camp to go to Denver to take a physical examination. At that time Mrs. Kuwahara was going to Denver as well. He was able to sit next to her. My son was still young and was tired and slept while Mrs. Kuwahara was watching on. She told me later, "It was a pitty that such a young and cute thing had to go to war. I really wanted to cry for him."

Yes. This was the most difficult thing I had to face in my entire life. If it was just the safety of our son, then I can face it. But the other people scorned us and talked ill about us. These things made our life very difficult.

My son went to Italy and fought fierce battles, but he came home alive. They were hiding in a hall. But his friend got shot in a stomach and the other one was also shot, but fortunately my son came home unharmed. While he was dodging bullets in a hall, memories of ministers, Sunday school teachers, and friends flashed in his mind.

AK. There were noisy people who did not understand anything. But did they say lots of things!

AYO. Well, we were called "inu" (dogs). But you know, the status which Japanese gained in this country came from these soldiers who did such a super job in Italy. Of course they were in 442 Combat Unit. He still tells me that even if he trys to explain their hardship no one will be able to understand him. After my son was drafted, others began to comply with draft, too. And the son of the mean person who yelled at us, also went to the army.

AM. When the war began, I too had to take a physical for the army. However, I knew they will not take me because I had 3 children already. My

wife was already dead by then. I was too old to go to war for one thing, and if they drafted me the government must be responsible for taking care of my kids. So I was sure that they would not take me. However, my son got drafted when we were in Cincinatti. It was right after his high school graduation. He was supposed to go to college, but the draft had got wind of it. So he could not go to college. I suppose they were watching kids who were graduating from high school for drafting. He was trained for 4 months, then he was sent to Iiliphin via Australia. By the time he came to Okinawa, the war came to an end. I was very worried about him because Iiliphinos shot at Japanese. He was told not to walk around the town by himself. He was to go out of the army camp with his white friends. He had to be very careful there. Then he went to Okinawa. He stayed there for two months and came back to the States.

He was able to travel around Japan. He met his sister there. He took thousands of photos, but he had so many that I could not even look at them.

In Tokyo he stayed with my relatives there. He was planning to stay there for a week. But he was bitten by flees all night long and he was so itchy that he cut the stay to 3 days and left the house. He said that these bites were so itchy that he suffered 3 days from the bites. It was right after the war so they did not have cigarettes, but he could get any amounts he wanted in the army. Besides, he did not smoke himself. So he brought cartons of cigarettes to my relatives. These were very valuable gifts. However, he could not stand these flee bites, so he cut his stay very short.

Well, I suppose there was no chemicals to kill flees because of the war.

Cleanliness at that time was the secondary consideration. He did stay in Tokyo for a while, though, before he came back to the States.

Q. There was a question of loyality which Japanese people were forced to take sides. What kind of things do you remember from that confrontation?

AM. Those people who were Japan loyalists, were sent to Tule Lake. I don't know what happened to them.

Q. I heard that the question an Emperor was taken out of the questionaire. Am I correct?

AM. I think 442 soldiers really demonstrated the fact that Japanese Americans were loyal American citizens. Though parents were put in the concentration camp, these young Japanese American soldiers proved themselves to be loyal citizens. I think parents also benefited from their work. After that incident there were not very many problems anymore. I think people who put us in the camp were embarrassed by their own acts.

ANS. In the camp there were those people who had short wave radios and listened to the "Nippou Pai Hone: Ho-koku" (official news from Japanese was headquarters). All the news which came out of the Nippou Dai Hone: were lies, but some Issei believed the news. These believers used to write news on paper and pass them around. There were quite a few people who were pro-Japan. There were problems between pro-Japan and the moderate groups. These fanatical pro-Japan people used to accuse others. They said that the huge Japanese navy was not going to be destroyed by anyone in the world. These people who were listening to the shortwave radio spread the news all over the place. Well, you know you could not blame these people,

because it was Japanese Government who lied first.

Q. Did arguments between these two groups continue to happen after the fanatical people were sent to Tule Lake?

ANS. There were some of these fanatical people who were not sent to Tule Lake. Well, this news paper containing the State of Japanese armed force was an impressive thing. They used to list all kinds of victories all over the Pacific. There were those who kept these newspapers from the beginning. It got to be quite voluminous.

Q. They were not caught by the Administration?

ANS. No. They did all these things under cover. Actually those fanatical people were in a close contact with each other and they passed information amoung themselves. So there was no way in which the administration could get hold of these newspapers.

Q. Was there any truth to these rumors?

ANS. No. No. Not at all. However, these people were saying what they heard from the Japanese Government. It was the Japanese Government who was deceiving people. There were people who sent letters to our camp from other camps telling us about these news. They were saying that the information they got was the same with what we got in our camp. So the story must be true. It might sound very commical now, but at that time these people were very serious.

AM. I was in Cincinnatti and I used to go to see movies there. There I saw news films on the battle of the Midway. In it they showed the defeat of the Japanese Navy. It was a very heavy defeat. The news film showed that there was very heavy fog and battleships had to communicate with each other through telephone and that communication

was picked up by American intelligency. It was said that Japanese were communicating by codes. So they worked very hard to break it. Japanese battleships were concentrating in the Midway. They said that Americans mobilized all available airplanes for the attack. These things were shown in a movie in Cincinnatti. You know, I thought American Government was telling us truth, because they showed it before the war was over. Newspaper was carrying the same news within a few days. Though Japanese government was saying, "Japan is winning. Japan is winning," but I had a different feeling about that.

Q. Did you believe that Japan was winning?

AM. I knew that Japan was doing their best, and were winning some battles, but I just could not believe that. I just listened to them from the right ear and let it go from the left ear.

AK. I suppose there were those people who could not believe that Japanese might be defeated. I know there were many fights between fathers and sons.

ANS. There were differences in economic and cultural levels. I knew that Japanese Army and Navy were good and strong. But they too are limited. Japan did not have materials that America had. So I knew that Japan was losing the war.

AM. When American pilots went out for bombing, they were told to come back alive. But in Japan pilots were told to die at the battlefield, so they killed good pilots first.

ANS. I heard the same thing. Japan killed all the good pilots in the beginning. So there was no chance for Japan winning the war. I heard from the people who were in the Phillipines that Japan did not

have oil because tankers got sunk by American bombing. So that was another reason why Japanese airforce was very ineffective. So all these resources were the things which they had to accumulate. So if the war was to prolong, then Japan was not going to be able to withstand the pressure of war. It does make lots of difference between the country which had no natural resources and the one which had everything as much as it wanted. If it were like the Sino-Japanese war or Russo-Japanese war, then it was alright because the battle field was closer to Japan and it was also relatively short time. I am a Japanese, but I knew it was a terribly difficult war for Japan.

Q. How did you feel when Japan lost the war?

AK. It was a very tragic day. Like my husband, for instance, he covered himself with "Futon" (guilt) and did not come out of it all day. Our son said, "See, I told you. You said Japan was going to win, but they lost." So it was doubly difficult for him to come out. (participants laugh)

AYO. Reverend Watanabe used to say,"Japan is going to win. So let us go back to Japan." I don't know how many times he said this to my husband. He was in his 80's so he was retiring. Even he believed that Japan was going to win.

Q. How did you feel when Japan lost the war?

AYO. It was very tragic, and I felt "zannen". We stayed here because the children were citizens of the U.S.A. and we also had grandchildren, too, but...

AM. I was outside of the camps so I was getting all kinds of news and I was expecting it. So I did not take this as a shock.

ANS. I did not want to accept the news joyfully. I did think Japan was winning when they went through Singapore. But when they failed at Guadacamal then I knew that they were going to lock in food and ammunition. I thought Japan was going to lose from these things. When they lost Philippines, then my thesis was proven to be true. It was "zannen" but the time was such that they could not be helped. They say that Defense Department with Mr. Tojgo pushed the war through the Diet. That's why Japan went into war. I cannot take joy in Japan's defeat at all, but that was the "flow of time" (the way the ball bounced).

Q. When the war ended, you were able to come back to California. Is that right?

AM. We were allowed to come back to the West Coast.

ANS. It was right after the war wasn't it? The war ended on August 15, 1945, so we came back here before a month was up.

Q. When did you come back here?

ANS. I came back here on September 13, 1945.

Q. Oh, then it was within one month before the end of war. Was there any other Japanese people?

ANS. Yes. We came back here for the sake of my children's schooling. I was not a Buddhist but I did put up a tent with them and waited until others came back. Mr. Yamamoto and Mr. Sakaquchi lived here in this church.

Q. How were you received by the white people?

AK. I did not think it was bad.

AYO. We were Japanese, so some showed a bad attitude towards us. I went to a Ballico store to buy things but they did not sell anything to me. They served people who were behind me, but they did not come to help me. When all the customers left the store, then they came to help me. There were many incidents like that.

Q. How long did this kind of discrimination last?

AYO. These things did not last too long at Ballico. It must have been about 6 months. Well, then they must have begun to think about their business. They began to serve Japanese people.

Q. Were there any problems at school, when your children returned to school?

ANH. There were times when our children were pushed around at school. These things lasted for awhile, too.

ANS. There were some cases which our children were treated discriminately.

AYO. There was an incident where someone shot a bullet into a house owned by a Japanese. It was those people who came back to see the situation in Cortez.

ANS. It was the time when we were still in the camp. It was Mr. Noji and Mr. Kage. They came here to see the situation and they stayed at the old parsonage. It was at that time when someone shot a bullet into the house. So they were really surprised. So one of them ran back into the camp. But the other stayed there. He worked in the vinyards. By the time we came back, he was working in a raisonplant, dehydrating Thompson grapes. It was a farm co-op plant. So when we came back, we sent out luggage to the co-op. It was very beneficial for us. Our train stopped right here, too, and it was very nice. So we were able to come back here without too much

complication for the transportation.

Q. When you came back here, you had to cultivate the field all over again?

ANS. Yes. That was the real problem. We leased our field. Though there was one manager, he leased each field to others. The difficult thing was that these people did not return the fields to us right away. They also used our house, too. But they did not want to return the houses to us. They too had to find houses of their own. Even white folks were having hard times finding housing. Sakaquchi family were lucky. They got back into the house right away.

MAJU SAKAGUCHI

AS. Yes. When they left, they cleaned up the house and it was kept very clean. It was the person who drove tracktors.

AYO. If you had bad persons in your house, then it was very bad. When they left they took everything they could. All those things they took were ours, you know. They did not move for 3 months either.

ANS. It was different with different people. These people who used our house could not leave until they found their own house. So they stayed and stayed, and we had to live in a tent.

Q. What do you mean by living in a tent?

ANH. It was an army tent. WRA loaned us tents, pots and pans and all other necessary things. We pitched tents like army camps. It was the place where the Buddhist church is now. It was a very hard life.

AYO. It was a very hard life, we had to steam rice in a great big pot. It was just like the messhall in the camp (except that we did not have that facility.) They asked us to be the chief cook in the beginning. We refused, but they asked us again and again, so we

accepted the responsibility, we made steamed rice in a big pot twice. We made toast outside on a big grill.

Q. How many families did you feed?

AYO. There were many of them ... maybe 20 families.

Q. When did you get up in the morning to get ready?

AYO. Three in th morning. We stamed rice and made rice ball for lunch.

Q. How about dinner?

AYO. People came home early, because they did piece work.

Q. What time did you go to sleep?

AYO. Well, it was rather late, because we had to get ready for the breakfast. It must have been about 10:00 pm.

ANS. You see, we had only one big pot for rice and a few pans for all these families. Didn't we take turns for the chief cook?

AYO. Yes, it was after we had worked for a while, maybe a month. After that we took turns.

Q. How long did that tent last?

ANS. It must have been about 3 months.

Q. It was still winter, wasn't it?

ANS. Yes. And it rained very hard. We had to use lanterns, too. It was very difficult for families with small children.

Q. Did you have any money?

ANS. Yes. Everybody had enough money to sustain themselves.

Q. That was really good.

ANH. Yes. We saved money and spent it very carefully.

Q. How much money did you need for a month?

AYO. We asked $5.00 from each family. You know people used to say, "I grow tomatoes, so please come and get them. It was just like that with other vegetables. These things helped us a lot. They were so kind and helpful. They said that we helped them a lot. So they were returning the favors.

ANS. These people were Philipinos who were labor contractors. They worked for Japanese families, and while we were in camps, they took care of our farms. One of these Philipinos used to work for Asa family. When we came back this man was growing tomatoes and other vegetables. This man, a Philipino, used to say that they are Asians, just like Japanese are, and they really took care of us. They used to say, "We all are Asians and you don't have to worry." They used to come over and help us alot.

ANH. They had the same attitudes even before the war. They said that they were Asians and we should help each other. They came and helped us in the fields.

AYO. They brought eggplants when it was in season. When it was tomato season, they brought tomatoes after tomatoes. Well, we ate them every day.

Q. You asked $5.00 from each person?

AYO. No. It was $5.00 from each family. When the money ran out, then we asked some more.

Q. How long did that $5.00 last?

AYO. It was .75¢ for each family, or something like that. So it could not have lasted one week. It was not money but food that we could not get.

ANS. Once a Philipino brought us fish, a salmon. The only thing we could buy was rice at that time. So it was very precious thing we received.

Q. You mean Japanese people did not go fishing?

ANH. Well, for one thing we did not have fishing poles and also we were afraid to go out, then.

ANS. The first concern was to produce good grapes and sell them. And also to go back to our houses. You see, we used to be the bosses and used sharecroppers, but that year we were share croppers and they were the bosses. We wanted to finish the work in the field that year. The faster we could, the sooner we can get back into our house. So we worked very hard. We even got payed by our "Bosses" who used to be our workers. It took till November. We were picking grapes till then.

Q. When the season was over, did they return your land to you?

AYO. Well, no. They did not leave our houses until they found their own houses.

Q. At the sametime the field as well?

ANS. Yes.

AYO. But the field was in a bad shape.

AK. It took us three years before we could put our vineyard back into good shape. When we went to see our vineyard we found weeds so high. I couldn't even see vines.

ANS. Mrs. Kajioka's field was in a bad shape, but Mrs. Yoneyama's field was well cared for.

AYOU. Our house was an old and poor house. So they gave it back to us soon. We stayed in a church for a while, but we were able to get back into our house soon.

ANH. Ours was rather late wasn't it?

AYO. My husband ordered a "ohuro" (a bath tub) and set it immediately. We worried about burning wood, food, "okazu" (supplemental dishes). So we just did not have time to pick grapes at all. We were very very busy.

ANS. Well, it was the same with us. We had to pitch a tent, set up kitchen area, buying and gathering food. Yes, it was very busy. Oh, yes, we had to make toilet, too. For a while it was very busy. We could not go to work until all these things were organized.

Q. Was that "ohuro" (a public bath) public? Could 20 families use it without getting dirty?

AYO. No. It was a huge one like this blackboard. People would wash themselves before they got into the tub. So it did not get dirty.

ANH. We had just a tub. So we just had to wipe ourselves.

ANS. Until we pitched a tent, we slept in this church. Everybody slept in the hall right next to each other. Men, women, children, it did not matter who they were. We all slept in the same hall. They say, "Zakone" in Japan, which means sleeping like many fish layed out on a board. Well, at that time there was no pride or shame. The only concern was to have a roof over our head.

ANH. Inspectors used to come around and see how we were doing. He just stuck his head in the hall and said, "Oh they are doing OK."

ANS. Well, though Japanese had a rough time , we really think America is a great country. When I visited Japan, they used to ask me, "How did Americans treat Japanese there. We really worried about Japanese Americans." But I know people in Japan had it rougher. They really suffered. People who came back from Korea and Manchuria faced the worst situation. They said that these people who came back to Japan with only what they wore. On the other hand, food and clothing were provided by the government here. It was a good treatment we had in this country.

They say the reason why we were put in the camp was to protect us from hostile people. My relative was a POW, who was fighting against America. One soldier told him if he would like to come to the U.S.A. He refused because he was so worried about his wife and children in Japan. So I told him that our treatment in the camp was a lot better. We were well protected.

AM. I left camp earlier and went to Cincinnati.

Q. When was that?

AM. It must have been a year after we stayed in Amachi camp. Mr. Hiratee told me that he wanted to study. I left the camp before he did. I was not discriminated in Cincinnati at all. Then I went to Detroit and worked in the Automobile factory. I was there till the end of the war. My son, too, was able to work there during his school vacation. We sent him to school so that he would not have to go to war. I had him registered, tuition, room and board paid. But as soon as he graduated from high school he was drafted. Some one must have been watching. So he went. He spent $2\frac{1}{2}$ years in

Okinawa.

Q. I was in Japan during that time. Once in a while GI's came to our school in Army trucks and spraid DDT all over our body,hair and everyplace; boys and girls likewise. It was to kill flees and lice, but we turned white with DDT.

ANS. They say there were ticks in Colorado. Mr. Sakaguchi, Mr. Yamaguchi and Mr. Yamashita went to work someplace in Colorado and they were bitten by ticks.

Q. So you spent 3 months in the army tent and were able to go back to your own house. But were you able to farm well?

AYO. During the war the price of grapes were very good. So Mr. Momberg was able to save some money for us. He paid our mortgages during that time. When we left we were having really rough times, but when we came back the financial picture was a bit better.

Q. I would like to ask you this. Do you think that Nissei did very well in school?

AYO. Yes. They were very good students. I don't want to brag about it, but they were better than others in most of the schools.

Q. How about the other people?

ANS. We sent many children to schools. I used to think that Nisei did rather well. I still have 2 sons in college. The rest are graduated from colleges. My children liked to go to school.

Q. Why did you think Nisei did so well in school?

AYO. Would it be that because Nisei did not have to work as hard as Issei, so they could concentrate on studying?

AK. I also think that Nisei had seen Issei working very hard, so in

turn they studied very hard. These hard working Issei were sending Nisei to schools so they seemed to feel that they had to study hard.

AYO. So I think most Nisei were above average in their grades.

AYA. They did not say that by words, but I'm sure they were thinking about all these things.

ANS. There is also another reason, I think. First Issei pioneers were those who had no education, not all of them were of course. But they came here because of the financial difficulties in Japan. They wanted to earn money. They had a very difficult time and this kind of hardship could not last too long. So they had to go to school and earn the status as respectable as whites. I feel this was in the back of their minds. So when they studied, they did not waist time. They studied hard and made themselves in those days.

Q. There are some proud people who say that Japanese have better brains than others. But do you think that Japanese have better brains than the whites, for instance?

ANH. Some of the white students came from lawyer's families or doctors families and they were very sharp. These students were naturally bright. However, Japanese students had no such family background and they had to study hard to achieve what they have achieved. I know Nisei studied till midnight and even till 1:00 am in the morning.

ANS. I know there are those who did very well in schools but did not do so well in society. In this sense, whites do have foundations. These respectable white people's children do study according to

their selfesteem, so they continue to achieve well in society, too.

Q. Mrs. Kajioka, what do you think?

AK. I had six children, but I could not send them through college. The last 2 sons went to the Army and came back so they did go to college by themselves. Jokingly they say that they do not owe college education to mama and papa. Other children finished high school.

Q. Your sons could not go to college because they had to help papa, is that right?

AK. Yes.

Q. What do these college graduates do?

AK. The last son has been working at Sumitomo Bank in Sacramento for over 10 years.

Q. How about the other one?

AK. He is in Richmond. He is an accountant. He is working there for mor than 20 years now.

Q. Do you have others?

AK. I have 3 more sons. One of them is a truckdriver, transporting meat. And the other one is a mechanic. The oldest one is farming with us.

Q. How about your children?

ANS. The oldest one is an accountant. He had been working for more than 10 years. When I decided to retire, I asked him whether he would like to farm, he said he would. He has been farming with me for 3 years now.

The next one was a teacher, but she got married, so she is not working right now. The next one is a secretary. The next one is

also a secretary. The next one is a teacher in Merced. The next boy is an administrator in the Merced City School District. The next 2 sons are now going to college; one is in San Jose State and the other in Chico State. We have 9 children.

Q. How about you Mrs. Yoshida?

AYO. The first son is farming, though he was an electronic technician. The second one was a mechanic, but he is farming also. The third one is in San Jose; he is a dental technician. The fourth one went to the Army and learned musical instrument. He lives in San Bruno. The fifth one is landscaping in Merced.

Q. How about Mrs. Sakaguchi?

MAJU SAKAGUCHI

AS. I have 5 children, 2 boys and 3 girls. The first one is a farmer, the second one is an office worker. The oldest girl attended high school in Japan. The second one went to school in Iowa and got married. The third girl attended college and got married. She has 4 children.

Q. How about you?

AYO. I have 6 children. The first son is farming. The second son is also farming. The third boy is working in an office in a nursery. The oldest daughter is here in Cortez and the second one is in El Ceritto. The third girl is working in the Funi Bank. The oldest one went through Jr. College, the second UC Berkeley, the third Jr. College. Younger 2 sons graduated from UC Davis. The oldest son had to take care of the farm, because my husband had died early. This one attended night school and graduated from Jr. College. I did not know that he graduated from it.

Q. The reason why you came to Cortez and settled here was because you wanted to educate your children. Do you think it was worthwhile for you to come here?

ANS. As I said before, it has become very easy. However, after we came here, during the time when we were sending kids to school, it was very difficult. I came here as a "yobiyose" and my father had a house to live in. So I had some place to sleep. But when pioneer Issei came, they had to work for white people without knowing English. They worked 11 hours to earn $1.00. That's how they raised their children.

In comparison, today, late commers young Issei had made it rather easy. Though we had to work hard, we were able to send children through schools, but it was very difficult for pioneer parents.

AYO. Yes it was. When we got up in the morning it was still dark and you could see lights here and there.

Q. How did you spend a day? What time did you get up in the morning for instance?

AYO. Well, when we got up it was still dark. It must have been about 5:00 am.

Q. Then what did you do?

AK. Well, you see my mother-in-law was with us, so my husband and I went out to work in the fields from the dawn. We did not come home until it was dark. So when kids got sick, they did not cry, "Mama!", instead they cryed, "Obachan! Obachan!" (Grandma! Grandma!) Well, because Mama was not at home all the time, so children had to depend on the grandmother.

ANS. Well, I remember getting up about 4:00 am to go to work in Cressy (near Livingston) to work in the onion field.

Q. That early in the morning?

ANH. Well, you have to work early in the morning when you work with onions. If it gets late in the afternoon, onion gets burned. So we quit working around 10:00 am and rested.

ANS. Even if we were working on our own field, we had to start from 6:00 am. It's really easy now. We got lazy. Even if it were winter time, we washed up early and worked in the vineyard cleaning vines. Men, women and children worked together. We worked 13 hours with strawberries for instance.

Q. What would you like to say to Sansei?

AYO. I would like to tell them that the reason why Japanese Americans have a fairly good life is because Issei had worked very hard to build basis for it. Sansei listen to us well.

MAJ. SAKAMOTO

AS. You know Nisei don't want to talk about this. They say they don't want to hear.

Q. What would you like to tell them?

AS. I haven't thought about it. Our youngest one is 19 now.

Q. My grandmother used to say that hard work is good enough to buy for young people.

AYO. I agree with that. When you become older, you will understand why. Nowaday's young people really don't know what hardship is. Parents send them to school. If they study hard it's really worth it, but...

Q. What do you think?

ANS. I would like to preserve the hardship of Issei for Sansei. I would

like them to have the spiritual strength to overcome crises of life.

ANH. I would not like to be a domineering mother. My idea is "you make your own bed." If you don't, then you must sleep in a messy bed.

Q. How about you, Mrs. Kazioka?

AK. They are all grown ups now. They don't speak in Japanese and I don't understand English well. But I do wish them to become very good persons. I just don't know what I should tell them.

Q. Who do you think that good person is?

AK. Well, he is deligent, not laughed at, honest and a good worker.

Q. What do you think?

AYO. I would like them to be very kind and honest and have faith. Just like Mrs. Nazita said they do listen to our stories. They do know our hardship. It is very important that they are prepared for the future hardships.

Q. Mr. Mayeda?

AM. I don't try to influence them. If they want to go to college, I'll help them as much as I can. If he needs money I'll give it to him. He did go to college, but he found out that even if he graduated from college, he could not get a job. So he quit the school and started working. But he started going to night school. In fact, he became better student that way. He has been working at the same place for 10 years now.

My grandson is studying to be a doctor. My grandchildren don't speak Japanese at all. It's the same with all of them. Even if I try to speak to them in Japanese they don't pay any attention. They would laught and show attitudes which say," I don't know what you are talking about." His mother speaks to him in English,

so there is no opportunity to speak in Japanese at all. Everything is in English. They come to wake me up in English saying, "Grandpa, Grandpa".

AYO. It's kind of hard. When they were small they used to come to me saying, "Grandma, Grandma." But when they start going to school, they just said, "Hello". and go way. Even if I try to talk to them they don't understand. When I call them on the telephone, if their mother is not home, it's really terrible. We stumble over words and both don't know what to say. We can't communicate with each other, at all.

ANH. I heard that Nisei and Sansei in Los Angeles were able to attend Japanese schools, so they can speak in Japanese very well.

Q. You mean you did not have a Japanese school here?

AM. We had one before the war. Buddhist church sponsored it, but it did not open after the war.

A. Even if a Japanese school is opened, Sansei would not attend it. Before the war a Christian minister tought Japanese here. Reverend Watanake tought Japanese. Buddhist church formally called a teacher from Japan to teach Japanese.

AM. Well, so if grandchildren spoke English only, then we had to learn to speak in English.

ANS. Well, I'm studying English very hard. I have to do it.

AK. Nisei do speak Japanese very well, because their parents spoke Japanese, though they cannot read or write in it. Some people asked my son, "how many years have you stayed in Japan?" So he says jokingly, "3 years," though he has never been there.

Q. American teachers thought that Japanese culture was inferior when Nisei attended primary schools. So they must have felt discriminated, becuase they did speak to each other in Japanese for awhile. Well, first of all they looked Japanese and their behaviors and manners were different. So it wasn't that Nisei hated Nisei , but that they had some feeling of toward them. They were discriminated because they were Nisei. They were in a very difficult situation. Have you thought about these things?

I know a white school teacher who told me that when Nisei children drew pictures they would draw a big battleship with a big Japanese flag and a small battleship with a small American flag. In their formative years they must have experienced deep feelings of disadvantage and loss because they were Japanese. They must have acquired an inferiority complex here.

ANS. My wife was born here and doesn't know anything about Japan. She attended highschool for 2 years. Her parents did not understand English at all. But many Japanese children had to repeat the first year because of language deficiency. However, when they learned language skills, they could even skip a year or two. As to inferiority complex, it all depends on the family background and individual experience. I heard that Florin, Walnut Grove had segregated schools. So when they went to school, they would be talking to each other in Japanese. So people in that area can speak Japanese very well.

AHN. There was a man who moved to Cortez from Florin and he could not speak English very well. He had a terrible accent.

ANS. Once there was a discussion about building a neighborhood school here. They (white officials) would build a school right in the middle of Cortez, so Japanese could educate their children there. However, one of the prominent Japanese men, Mr. Miyamoto, said that they will collect used text books to the school, with lesser quality teachers so we should not ask the district to build a separate school for ourselves. That's why we did not have a segregated school. In the beginning we thought that it was a good idea because it was going to be very close to our homes and convenient. They did say, though, that they would not provide enough funding to carry out the educational objectives. However, they said that these segregated schools lacked pencils and papers. Other schools get more benefits.

Q. You know, it's about 10:00 pm now. I could stay here all night to listen to you, because there must be more things that you could share with me. However, I must thank you for your cooporation and terminate the interview for now. We will be translating this conversation so that young people can read about you. We are hoping that we can publish a book from these materials. These materials will be used in ethnic studies programs, as well as in churches. We could also make children's stories and also use them in Sunday schools. Thank you very much.